

## **On Zen Practice and the Suffering, Sorrows, and Tragedy of Our Traumatized World**

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We live in a reciprocal universe. No one and nothing is ultimately isolated or alone in deepest reality.

Whatever happens anywhere, in some way affects us, and conversely, how we live and act and think affects everything everywhere.

Given what is now going on, and the suffering involved to so many, please do what you can to keep your practice in mind as you go about your day. When sitting please *really* sit. Don't just sit in zazen dreaming of other things. Commit as fully as you can to this breath, this count, this koan, letting all else go. In this simple way you will be participating in actively helping to bring peace, or in helping to establish the possibility of peace in our deeply suffering, terribly un-peaceful world.

I think of the jataka tale of the *Brave Little Parrot*. The forest is burning and the little parrot sees one little thing she can do to help stop the blaze. And she does that one little thing with her whole heart. Bringing her tiny drops of water, one-by-precious-one, ultimately has an effect much greater than logic could ever predict.

The so-called "big picture" is built of very small things.

Breath by breath, drop by drop.

Finally — none of the above is meant to suggest that doing zazen is a replacement for other forms of action. These words are simply presneted as an encouragement to really do what we are already doing. The point — as always — is that practice is active, not passive, a way of doing something valuable for all.